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18 June 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: John H. Stein  
Associate Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT: Briefing of the NSCPG on Sensitive  
Collection Operations

1. As you are aware, under Executive Order 12036 the DCI is obliged to provide an annual briefing to the S&C (now NSCPG) on "sensitive collection operations" conducted by the Intelligence Community. The last briefing was conducted in July of 1980 when the DCI and the then DDO provided the briefing. Presumably, another is due this summer or early fall.

2. The modalities for conducting this briefing are as follows. The Agency alerts NSA and the Defense Department generally of the upcoming briefing and solicits their submissions. Likewise, the DDS&T and the DDO division chiefs are invited to submit contributions for the briefing. This call is issued in the name of the DCI, but all of the submissions flow through the DDO's office. There, a briefing book is compiled from which the briefing is conducted.

3. When this process first began, there was much debate over the definition of sensitive collection. At last, the DDO developed the criteria which were accepted by DCI Turner and which were used to make judgments as to which operations they were to be briefed on. A copy of these guidelines is attached herewith as Tab A. At previous briefings, the S&C appeared satisfied with these criteria for the briefing. One book was provided to the principals. ~~That is the small black notebook attached.~~ A second book, somewhat more complete, was provided to the DCI and the DDCI. ~~That notebook is the white volume attached.~~ It reads the same as the principals' book, but on the left side of the HUMINT section, the assets referred to in the principals' book are cited by cryptonym. A third book, previously carried by the DDO himself, contains a much more complete and detailed backup to be used should any of the principals ask more detailed questions. ~~That notebook is the large black one attached.~~

4. As you will note, the principals of the S&C were given very generic information. They did not push further and, as noted

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above, seemed satisfied with their briefing. Frankly, it is my personal view that this is a rather feckless exercise. The protection of sources and methods does not allow a complete, detailed briefing. However, on the other hand, the briefing does provide the principals with some feel for the totality of the intelligence collection activities of a sensitive nature conducted by the Intelligence Community.

5. If you agree, we will begin the process of preparing for the 1981 briefing.

6. P.S. You will note in these notebooks that there is a section on covert action. That is because the July 1980 briefing combined both collection and covert action. They need not be combined, and in fact the only reason for doing so is to avoid the second required briefing of the SEC; namely, the annual briefing on covert action activities. Pulling the material together for such a briefing is much more simple, for the Covert Action Staff of the DDO has all the material at its fingertips.



John H. Stein

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Attachments:  
As stated

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